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Articles in Today's Clips Thursday, March 15, 2007

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The Daily Telegram

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THURSDAY MARCH 15, 2007 Last modified: *Wednesday, March 14, 2007 5:20 PM EDT*

Authorities: Evidence of 'horrendous' abuse found

Police say they have identified multiple victims in a sex abuse case involving Adrian daycare owner Douglas Jay Clark.

By [Dennis Pelham](#)

Daily Telegram Staff Writer

ADRIAN — Multiple victims have so far been identified in an investigation of sexual abuse of children at Guardian Family Daycare, 1013 Erie St., Adrian police said Tuesday.

The investigation started with a parent complaint late Friday afternoon and resulted in daycare operator Douglas Jay Clark, 52, being arrested on a first-degree criminal sexual conduct charge over the weekend. A \$5 million bond was set pending a March 26 preliminary examination scheduled at his arraignment Monday in Lenawee County District Court.

"We have identified numerous victims now, running the gamut of ages from preschool to preteens," said Adrian Police Chief Terry Collins. "We expect to have many more warrants," he said.

Evidence seized from the daycare center, which is also Clark's home, includes videos and images from still cameras, he said.

"There are some things on there that are very graphic," Collins said.

The videos, photos and other evidence developed so far make this the most troubling case he has been involved in throughout his entire police career, Collins said.

"I have been in law enforcement since 1968," Collins said, and has investigated murders and gruesome vehicle accidents.

"This is the most horrendous thing I've ever encountered," he said.

Investigators are continuing to talk with witnesses and examine evidence, Collins said.

"This is going to be an extremely long investigation," he said.

Part of the investigation is a forensic evaluation of a computer seized from Clark's home that is being conducted by two Adrian police officers who received specialized training last year, he said. The probe could reveal if any images of children being sexually abused had been loaded on the computer and transmitted over the Internet, he said, although there is no evidence at this point of child pornography distribution.

Clark is the only suspect in the investigation at this point, Collins said.

"We have nobody else we're focused on," he said. Clark's wife has denied any knowledge of alleged sexual abuse

of children at the daycare center she helped operate, he said.

Lovinna Clark said Monday she was “devastated” by the allegations.

Collins said medical evaluations and counseling is being made available through several agencies for victims and their families. All of the parents of children who are known to have attended the day care facility have been contacted, Collins said.

Guardian Family Daycare has been licensed by the state since 2002, he said, but investigators are not certain if Clark provided child care services prior to that time. Police are asking anyone with information who has not been contacted to call Detective Vince Emrick at 264-4887.

-- CLOSE WINDOW--



Woman charged with starving baby

3-month-old's death a homicide

March 15, 2007

BY JACK KRESNAK

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

A Flint woman was charged Wednesday in the starvation death of her 3-month-old son a little more than a year ago.

Yolanda Lamar, 36, was arraigned before 68th District Judge Michael McAra on charges of second-degree murder and second-degree child abuse in the death of G-eon Lamar. The baby, whose name also has been spelled G-oen, was born Dec. 5, 2005, and died March 5, 2006, said Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton.

Leyton said the investigation by Flint Police Detective Sgt. Lee Ann Gaspar took so long because of the need to obtain medical documentation and to have expert physicians review the information.

"There was a lot of investigating to do, a lot of hard work that had to be done by both Flint P.D. and my office," Leyton said.

The baby was found unresponsive by his 9-year-old half-brother, who told his mother that something was wrong, Leyton said.

"She picked the baby up and decided to give the baby a bath, thinking that might help, but he was already dead," Leyton said.

G-eon weighed 7 1/4 pounds when he was born and 8 1/4 pounds when he died three months later, Flint Police Chief Gary Hagler said.

The baby was seen by a doctor two weeks after his birth but had not been to a medical appointment after that, Hagler said. The boy's father, who was not identified by officials, does not live with the baby's mother and was not involved in caring for the boy.

An autopsy by Deputy Oakland County Medical Examiner Dr. Kanu Virani found that the cause of G-eon's death was "severe malnutrition and severe pneumonia," Leyton said. Virani ruled the death a homicide.

Lamar is being held without bond pending a pretrial hearing Friday.

Contact **JACK KRESNAK** at 313-223-4544 or jkresnak@freepress.com.

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This is a printer friendly version of an article from **The Detroit News**
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March 15, 2007

Flint mom charged with starving death of infant

Kim Kozlowski / The Detroit News

A woman whose 3-month-old son died of severe malnutrition and pneumonia two years ago was arraigned Wednesday on charges of second-degree murder and second-degree child abuse by Flint District Judge Michael McAra.

Yolanda Lamar, 36, of Flint, faces up to life in prison on the murder charge and up to four years on the child abuse charge.

Lamar's son, G-eon, died in March 2005. He weighed 8 pounds 4 ounces when he died -- less than a pound more than when he was born.

"The baby was not properly cared for, the baby was not fed," said Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton. "Basically, he was starved."

Authorities became aware of the infant when Lamar's 9-year-old son tried to interact with the infant, but he was unresponsive. He alerted his mother, who gave G-eon a bath before calling 911.

Flint Police Chief Gary Hagler was outraged at the child's death, saying there are plenty of agencies to help mothers with newborns and a law that allows women to abandon their infants to the police, fire or hospital officials without repercussion within the baby's first 72 hours of life.

"There is no excuse for this kind of treatment to a child in this day and age," Hagler said.

Lamar's 9-year-old boy and 11-year-old girl were removed from their home and placed in foster care. She is in the Genesee County Jail with no bond.

She will appear for a pretrial hearing Friday in 68th District Court before Judge William Crawford.

You can reach Kim Kozlowski at (313) 222-2024 or kkozlowski@detnews.com.

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Mother charged in baby's death

Action comes a year after boy died

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Thursday, March 15, 2007

By Kim Crawford

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FLINT - A 36-year-old Flint woman whose infant son died one year ago was charged Wednesday with second-degree murder and second-degree child abuse in his death.

"There is no excuse for what occurred," Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton said about the death of Yolanda Lamar's infant son.

Authorities say G'eon Lamar was severely malnourished, dehydrated and suffering from pneumonia when he died.

Leyton said the baby was born Dec. 5, 2005, and weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces. But when G'eon died at home three months later in early March, he had gained only one pound.

Why did it take a year after G'eon's death for his mother to be charged? Leyton said the case required expert witnesses, including a pediatrician, for medical testimony.

"This kind of investigation required extensive medical expertise, and to get the assistance of physicians took time," Leyton said.

He said after his office reviewed the investigation conducted by Flint police Sgt. Lee Ann Gaspar, they asked her to conduct additional interviews before they issued the warrant charging Lamar.

Lamar was arraigned before Flint District Judge Michael McAra. He ordered her remanded to the Genesee County Jail without bond until at least Friday, when an attorney representing her will meet with prosecutors. She faces a preliminary examination before Judge William Crawford later this month.

Police Chief Gary Hagler said Gaspar "did an excellent job" in the investigation, and said the tragedy of the case was that Lamar did not take advantage of a state law that allows a mother who doesn't want or cannot handle the responsibility of a baby to give the infant up at a fire station, police department or hospital with no questions asked.

Family court documents show Lamar's contact with state Child Protective Services workers goes back a few years, with allegations she had twice given birth to babies testing positive to exposure to marijuana, that she'd had marijuana in her home and that she'd failed to enroll her oldest child in school. Ultimately, she cooperated with authorities and kept custody of her children, until after G'eon's death.

At that time, Protective Services charged that Lamar "gave inconsistent accounts of the location of other children and the circumstances of the child's death." She told authorities she didn't think her baby had seemed ill and that she didn't believe he needed to be seen by a doctor, although the baby hadn't been eating well for several days, according to the abuse/neglect petition charging Lamar.

G'eon's maternal grandmother, who lived next door to Yolanda Lamar, told investigators three days after his death that she had advised her daughter to take G'eon to the doctor and assumed that had happened, the petition said.

After a trial in a family court in November, Genesee Circuit Judge Michael J. Theile terminated Yolanda Lamar's parental rights to her other children, then ages 11, 7, and 5.

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Flint Mother Charged In Death Of Infant Son

March 14, 2007 10:52 PM EST

(TV5) -- A Mid-Michigan mother is being charged with the murder of her own infant son. The 3-month-old was found lifeless inside a Flint home a year ago. The autopsy results are in, and police say all signs point to the mother.

Prosecutor David Leyton has filed Second Degree Murder and Child Abuse charges against 36-year-old Yolanda Lamar in the death of baby G'leon. In March of 2006, she called 911 and said her baby wasn't eating or responding. The autopsy indicated that the baby died from severe malnutrition and pneumonia. The report said it all could have been prevented.

It took a year to file charges against the mother of the child because medical experts were needed to determine the cause of death. Baby G'leon was seven pounds when he was born. He was found weighing just eight pounds when he died at the age of three months.

Lamar has two other children who have been well cared for. Her preliminary examination will be sometime later in March.



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Federal judge denies woman's appeal in child murder case

Thursday, March 15, 2007

By Steven Hepker

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A Jackson woman convicted of beating her son to death ran out of appeals in Michigan and now has been shut down in federal court.

U.S. District Judge Paul Borman this week called LaChante Mobley's appeal "frivolous," essentially ending any chance for a new trial or a change in her life sentence.

A jury found her guilty of felony murder and child abuse in the Dec. 19, 2002, beating death of 4-year-old Le'Marquis Hereford.

While investigators believe her live-in boyfriend, Anwar Benin, likely delivered the fatal blows to the boy's liver, a separate jury found Benin not guilty. He pleaded guilty to second-degree child abuse and was sentenced to two to four years in prison.

The state Department of Corrections is scheduled to release Benin on March 23, according to its offender-tracking Web site.

Mobley sought a writ of habeas corpus from the federal court on grounds the jury verdict was ambiguous and went against the great weight of evidence, and that the jury was not properly instructed.

Borman noted the jury verdict form was clear: Guilty of felony murder and child abuse, and not guilty of second degree murder. He also sided with the Michigan Court of Appeals and Supreme Court in ruling the evidence was sufficient to find her guilty of child abuse and felony murder.

"Plaintiff told the police that she 'whooped' and 'hit' her child on Tuesday, two days before his death," Borman wrote, adding that Mobley also demonstrated to police how she struck the boy.

Even if she did not directly kill the boy, she could have been convicted of murder under the aiding and abetting theory, because she hit the boy and gave Benin permission to discipline her son, the judge said.

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Boy, 6, testifies about beatings

Thursday, March 15, 2007

By Steven Hepker

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A 6-year-old Jackson boy whose mother is alleged to have spanked him repeatedly with a plastic spatula and wooden spoon testified in court Wednesday.

Jeannine Nyies is charged with child torture and child abuse of her son. Her live-in boyfriend, Ian Anderson, was recently found guilty of the same charges. Nyies' trial will continue at 1:30 p.m. today.

In testimony, the boy described spankings and other beatings. He said he could not get his arm to go down, could not sit down and had a scratch on his head. He said Anderson struck him more than Nyies. The boy was treated in August at Foote Hospital.

"Did you cry?" asked Assistant Prosecutor Susan Beebe about his reaction to the beatings.

"I mostly screamed," the boy replied.

Among other witnesses Wednesday were three doctors who said the 6-year-old victim suffered bruising on his arms and head, an open wound to the top of his scalp, and large, burn-like wounds on both buttock cheeks.

"There was an extreme concern about infection," said Dr. Gregory Bauman, who treated the boy.

The boy testified that his mother and her boyfriend told him to lie about what happened by saying he fell down the steps.

Dr. Kimberly Aiken, who treated the boy Aug. 9 at Foote Hospital, testified that she told him then that the injuries were not consistent with a fall.

In response, the boy said, "I'm telling the truth. I'm

going home and my mom is going to give me popcorn and ice cream and we will snuggle in bed and she will read me books," Aiken testified.

Bauman, too, said a fall down stairs would not cause such skin loss.

The boy's underwear was bonded to the weeping sores when Officer Kurt Engler was dispatched to the Carr Street house after a complaint by one of Nyies' co-workers.

Engler died recently of an apparent heart attack. His previous testimony in the case was read to the jury, with Beebe and defense attorney Anthony Raduazo reading questions and Assistant Prosecutor Allison Bates, on the stand, reading his responses in the transcript.

Engler had testified that Nyies admitted she hurt her son by spanking him repeatedly with a plastic spatula and pulling his hair.

Beebe alleges the boy's buttocks were struck at least 100 times with the spatula, causing what doctors said appeared to be severe burns that were scabbed over.

Anderson testified at his trial that both of them whipped her son with a spatula.

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www.record-eagle.com

03/15/2007

News in brief

Man is charged with abusing child

FROM STAFF REPORTS

TRAVERSE CITY — A Mayfield man faces a child abuse charge after sheriff's officials allege he rubbed a child's face in urine.

Charles Lee Mathis, 37, is charged with a fourth-degree child abuse misdemeanor after he allegedly rubbed a 3-year-old's face in urine on a rug hard enough that the child suffered rug burns March 8, court records show.

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Published March 15, 2007

Slain tot's mom trying to get baby

Loretta Moy in classes in bid to regain custody

By Kevin Grasha
Lansing State Journal

What's next

- Loretta Moy's next parental rights hearing is scheduled for June 6 before Ingham County Probate Judge Richard Garcia.

A 21-year-old Lansing woman, whose husband is serving a life sentence for killing her 1-year-old daughter, is making progress toward regaining custody of her infant daughter, a foster care worker testified Wednesday.

Ingham County Probate Judge Richard Garcia already has ruled Loretta Moy's 3-month-old daughter should be temporarily under the court's jurisdiction. The Michigan Department of Human Services has placed the child in an unidentified foster home.

At a hearing Wednesday before Garcia, the foster care worker, Brian Johnson, recommended Moy continue to be provided various services with reunification as the goal. Moy currently is allowed three hours per week of supervised parenting time.

Her daughter, however, cannot be returned to her until the court decides she poses no risk of harm.

Services that Moy will receive include parenting skills training and mental health therapy. Moy already has completed a parenting training course, Johnson said.

"I think there are issues that need to be ... addressed in counseling," Johnson said in court.

He said Loretta has been diagnosed with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Garcia also asked that Moy undergo an evaluation with a psychologist to help determine her ability to comply with the services.

Steve Lee Moy, 39, was convicted of murder in the death of his stepdaughter, Anishia. He was sentenced March 7 to a mandatory life sentence. He voluntarily has given up his parental rights to the daughter he fathered with Loretta.

That child was removed from Loretta's care days after she was born in November.

Court records reveal Loretta may have neglected Anishia by "not properly caring for the child" and leaving her in the care of people who were "inappropriate caregivers."

Testimony at Steve Moy's trial revealed Anishia had dozens of unexplained bruises on her body that were days or weeks old. She also had arm and wrist fractures that had healed.

Loretta Moy testified she bathed Anishia the night before she died, but said she saw no bruises or any injuries on her daughter's body.

Johnson said there are concerns about Loretta's emotional stability and decision-making skills. And there are concerns about the fact she doesn't have a job and is living with a friend.

Garcia set the next hearing for June 6.

Contact Kevin Grasha at 267-1347 or kgrasha@lsj.com.

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The County Press

Teachers face porn charges

by SUSAN YOUNGER
staff reporter

Two local teachers were charged with suspected involvement with child pornography Monday.

Scott Beyer, 39, a teacher at Woodside, Lapeer's alternative high school, and Eric Hyde, 33, a teacher and football coach at North Branch High School, were arraigned by Lapeer District Court Magistrate Gregory Wise after being arrested last Friday.

Beyer, who was released on a \$200,000 personal bond, faces four to seven years in prison if convicted of possession of child sexually abusive material and using a computer to commit a felony.

Hyde was released on a \$100,000 personal bond after being charged with possession of child sexually abusive material. If convicted of the charge, he could spend up to four years in prison.

"Both are to have no contact with minors not related to them," said Lapeer County Prosecuting Attorney Byron Konschuh. "Mr. Hyde is charged with possession for allegedly viewing it. Beyer is suspected of going farther; he downloaded it."

The arrests were made after an investigation linked credit card purchases of on-line pornography to Beyer and Hyde.

"The initial investigation began in 1999 when a Federal Task force from Dallas identified thousands of subject utilizing credit cards to purchase images of child pornography from a Web site called Landslide Inc.," said Lt. Patrick McGreevy.

Landslide acted as the gatekeeper between one Russian and two Indonesian Web masters who supplied customers with pornographic images of children in exchange for money. It included access to disturbing sites that have since been shut down.

The credit card transactions were traced and in 2001, over 1,200 suspected Michigan cases were forwarded to the Michigan Attorney General's office for further investigation. The Lapeer cases were sent to the Michigan State Police post in Lapeer.

"We executed the search warrants in 2003," said trooper Eric Hofmeister. "Their home computers were seized and underwent a forensic examination. The computer crimes unit has a huge back log."

Once the computers were seized, the teachers knew they were under suspicion, but the backlog of cases stalled the arrests.

"Forensic computer exams are very complex and time consuming," said McGreevy. "The computer crimes unit also investigates homicides, industry theft, child predators and fraud. They all take time; imagine having over 1,200 cases dumped on you."

There are no area children involved in the pornography the teachers are suspected to have viewed. The incident is unusual in Lapeer County, said Konschuh.

Both Beyer and Hyde are on paid leaves of absence from their respective school districts.

Hyde, a social studies teacher, is married with one child. He's been employed by North Branch Area schools since 2000.

Hyde is a popular varsity football coach and was named as The County Press 2006 Co-Football Coach of the Year. He was the first football coach to bring the team to the state playoffs.

"He's been placed on paid leave," said North Branch School Area Schools Superintendent Al Piwinski, who also expressed sympathy for his employee. "We'll be taking our lead from the prosecutor's office. I feel a sense of sadness for Mr. Hyde and his family."

Hyde is represented by Flint attorney Frank J. Manley, who is questioning the length and handling of the investigation.

"We're somewhat surprised this case is being brought up at this time," said Manley. "I believe once all the facts are in, Mr. Hyde will be cleared. But how will he ever get his reputation back?"

Beyer, whose wife is pregnant, has been employed by Lapeer Community Schools for 11 years. He teaches English, history and careers at Woodside School.

Superintendent Debbie Thompson said the school district is saddened by the incident.

"The safety and welfare of our students is our number one concern, and we take issues like this very seriously," said Thompson.

Many students at Woodside are shocked at Beyer's arrest.

"They like the teacher," said a parent's mother, who asked her name not be used. "They believe he's an awesome man. Students there are a tight knit group, and many of them were on the phone all Monday night with each other. It's a shame; he turned my daughter around."

Beyer is represented by Lapeer attorney Todd Pope, who didn't return phone calls by press time Tuesday.

A Woodside computer has been seized, but a decision was made not to take North Branch High School computer.

"It is a shared computer between many teachers, and not suspected of being used to view pornography," said Hofmeister. "It would have really been a hardship for the school to give it up."

The two are expected to appear in court Friday for pre-preliminary exams. At least one other Lapeer County person is being investigated for similar charges, said Konschuh.

"If you can't get the dealers, you have to go to the consumers," said Konschuh. "You have to destroy a market for pornography."

Susan Younger may be reached at (810)664-0811, Ext. 8122 or susan.younger@lapeergroup.com.

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Article published Mar 15, 2007

Police putting together task force to deal with child abuse

Blue ribbon sales will help child abuse victims

BY TIFFANY L. PARKS
STAFF WRITER

A newborn with broken toes, the toddler bound by duct tape and the death of a child allegedly thrown from a balcony.

These aren't storylines from horror movies but suspected child abuse cases in Canton.

"This is not a police problem, this is a community problem," said Canton Public Safety Director John Santomauro.

The Canton Police Department is assembling a focus group to study the growing number of child abuse incidents in the township. The group is designed to include doctors, social workers, school officials, child advocacy representatives and prosecutors.

Santomauro said the goal of the focus group is to present suggestions on how to protect children through awareness and prevention.

"There will always be incidents, unfortunately, but it's not enough for us to respond, arrest and then prosecute," he said. "We don't believe for a minute we can alleviate all child abuse but we have to take a serious look at this."

A "Positive Parenting" seminar will take place at 6 p.m. April 23 at Summit on the Park. The seminar will focus on the role of parenting to reduce child abuse.

Santomauro, who says children are one of the most vulnerable victim groups, said most child abuse stems from parenting issues.

"We have to get back to the basics of old school parenting," he said, adding that others need to step up and report any suspected child abuse. "We have to rule in favor of protecting a child (vs. being wrong)."

Canton resident David Loveland said he can appreciate the police department making an effort to curb child abuse.

"I think it's a great idea," he said. "It's about time we get the community to face this problem."

Loveland, a semi-retired pharmacist, is a member of the Exchange Club of Canton. A thrust of the nonprofit organization is child abuse prevention.

"It's one helluva problem," said Loveland, recalling an incident at his workplace where a woman began pushing and hitting a child over a set of lost keys. "Everyone just froze and no one knew what to do, but then finally one person offered to help her look for the keys as a way to get the kid from her grasp."

Santomauro said the police department wants to become proactive rather than reactive regarding child abuse.

A guest speaker for the parenting seminar will include a detective assigned to the Michigan Internet Crimes Against Children task force. The event is being hosted by the police department and Canton Leisure Services.

Those interested in attending can RSVP by calling (734) 394-5325.

The Exchange Club of Canton will have its annual blue ribbon sales next month to help victims of child abuse.

Blaming child abuse for the death of her young grandson, a Virginia woman started the blue ribbon movement in 1989 to celebrate the child's life. The color of the ribbon symbolizes bruises.

David Loveland, a member of the Canton organization, said the group will sell ribbons for \$1 and car magnets for \$3. His goal is to some day build a child abuse prevention center in western Wayne County.

The items will be sold on the following days:

- April 7 at Holiday Market, 520 S. Lilley Road.
- April 21 at Kroger, 45540 Michigan Ave.
- April 28 Farmer Jack, 225 S. Canton Center Road.

For more information on the blue ribbon sales, log onto the National Exchange Club Foundation Web site at www.preventchildabuse.com.

Senate Amends Child Protection Law

MIRS, March 14, 2007

The Senate unanimously passed legislation today amending the Child Protection Law to establish certain protocols for "high-risk" investigations involving children who have allegedly been abused or neglected.

SB 0273 clarifies that the Department of Human Services must notify both the prosecuting attorney and local law enforcement within 24 hours when an allegation is received about a risky situation such as severe abuse or suspected sexual abuse.

"The goal of this legislation is to provide greater protection for children," said bill sponsor Sen. Bill **HARDIMAN** (R-Kentwood). "I want to ensure that appropriate communication is maintained if a high-risk situation occurs. It is important for everyone involved to receive proper notification so steps can be taken to resolve unfortunate situations dealing with child abuse or neglect."

ClickOnDetroit.com

Vigil Held For Woman Found In Trunk

POSTED: 7:28 am EDT March 15, 2007

UPDATED: 11:01 am EDT March 15, 2007

REDFORD TOWNSHIP, Mich. -- Family and friends of Danielle Munoz gathered Wednesday night at a candlelight vigil to remember her.

Family members said not only was it an emotional farewell, but a plea for justice for the man who killed her.

"Her only mistake was returning back to him and loving a man with no heart, no feelings and no conscious," Danielle's mother, Teresa Munoz told Local 4 with tears in her eyes. "My daughter told me had a gun and yet she kept returning back to him."

The body of Munoz was found shot in the neck and stuffed in the trunk of a car outside an oil change shop in Redford Township on Monday.

Police said her boyfriend Ali Hourani is responsible.

RELATED TO STORY



Video: Family Gathers For Candlelight Vigil



"Her life was taken. She was young and didn't deserve to die," Lori Saad, Munoz's cousin, told Local 4.

Police believe it is a case of domestic violence.

Munoz's cousin told police Munoz warned them in her journal about her boyfriend's alleged abuse. Her cousin read from her journal, "So sad, I never knew love could hit you whenever it got mad. Call you names or smack you around or toss you on the ground. Or make you feel useless. If that's love than I don't want it anymore."

Her mother said she hope's Danielle's death is a lesson for everyone about domestic violence. " If it's abuse, he don't love you. If he hits you, he don't love you."

With the help of the Department of Homeland Security, investigators tracked down Hourani in Beirut.

Redford Township police department is handling the case from this moment on.

Police said it will be difficult to try to make contact with Hourani since the U.S. does not have an extradition treaty with Lebanon.

Funeral arrangements are set.

There are two viewings scheduled for Thursday from 2-9 p.m. and Friday from 1-9 p.m.

The funeral is scheduled for Saturday at 10 a.m. at Don Graham Funeral Home located at 1005 Junction Street in Detroit.

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Article published Mar 15, 2007

No one should have to live their life in fear

Violence against women — evidenced by far too many horrific news stories these past two weeks — is an all-too-common, disturbing and cruel fact of life.

What these horrible crimes tell us is that violence against women slices through all lines — social status, education, age, community, size of home or bank account doesn't matter. Violence against women is an equal-opportunity plague.

Most of us realize that hitting, hurting or killing another person when we lose our temper or feel we are losing control is wrong. But for some people — most of whom are men — violence is their solution of choice.

These past couple of weeks have been a seemingly endless, gut-wrenching parade of women injured and killed by men who supposedly had been in love with their victims.

In the case that's riveted the state, Stephen Grant, 37, of Washington Township in Macomb County was arraigned for the strangulation murder and dismemberment of his wife, Tara Lynn Grant, 34.

In Hamburg Township, an apparent murder-suicide claimed the life of 63-year-old Nancy Lowenbergh, a research nurse for the University of Michigan Minority Health Research Program. Police say she was the victim of a homicide. Her husband, psychiatrist John Lowenbergh, 65, was found dead next to her in bed with what police say was a self-inflicted gunshot wound to his head.

On Wednesday, a teenager shot his former girlfriend four times outside her Midland high school before shooting himself.

Former Cohoctah Township resident Patricia Anne Brimhall, 51, was shot to death by her ex-husband, Jon Lee Brimhall, 44, of Cohoctah Township, at her new home in Harper Woods on Thursday night. It appears Jon Lee Brimhall was distraught over their recent divorce.

Bonnie and Clyde Lucas were found dead Monday in their home just east of Williamston. Police say they died of gunshot wounds in a murder-suicide.

The body of a 27-year-old Detroit woman was found Monday afternoon in the trunk of a car parked at the Redford business owned by her boyfriend's family. She had been shot in the neck. Police are looking for her boyfriend, who they say is a suspect in her murder.

We can't say what precipitated the violence in these cases. We don't know whether there were longstanding problems of domestic violence, or whether the man just snapped. What we do know is that violence — even here in what some still consider rural Livingston County — is a fact of life for women far more than we can imagine.

Consider these facts:

- There were 623 personal protection orders filed in Livingston County last year.
- There were 841 calls made last year to the crisis line of LACASA, the not-for-profit organization in Livingston County that deals with domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. That averages out to 70 people a month so concerned about their safety that they called LACASA for help.
- There were 519 assault charges filed by the Livingston County prosecutor's office last year. Of those, 62 percent — or 324 — were for domestic violence.

This is why the work LACASA does is so vitally important.

In 2006, LACASA made 68 presentations on violence to various groups in our community. In all, nearly 1,900 people from all walks of life, from church groups to businesspeople to human service agencies to school personnel to law enforcement people, learned about violence in our community. In that same time frame, nearly 7,800 Livingston County students took part in prevention and education programs at school. In all, nearly 9,700 people learned what they needed to know about domestic

and sexual violence to keep themselves and their friends and loved ones safe.

Violence is wholly unacceptable. It's a message that needs to be driven home again and again and again. We all deserve to live in safety, not in fear for our lives. We need to avail ourselves of the educational resources offered to us through organizations like LACASA. We need to model good behavior for our children, even when we're frustrated and especially when we feel we're losing control. Violence isn't acceptable under any circumstances.

It's too late for the five women above who were killed by the significant men in their lives. But it's not too late to take proactive steps to ensure that we can all live our lives in peace.



Dems offer health plan for poor kids

March 15, 2007

BY KEN THOMAS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON -- Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton offered a plan Wednesday aimed at expanding the children's health care program to cover all children who are now uninsured.

The New York Democrat joined with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., to outline the plan, part of a five-year, \$50-billion attempt to boost the number of poor children provided health care by the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

"A lot of parents are in such a bind because they cannot afford to get the health care that their children need and deserve," Clinton said.

Clinton, who helped mold an unsuccessful plan to overhaul the health care insurance system when she was first lady, said the children's proposal "is the kind of congressional action that is a step toward universal coverage for everyone."

The measure likely will be part of Clinton's agenda as she pursues the Democratic nomination for president. Democratic rivals Barack Obama of Illinois and John Edwards of North Carolina both have favored providing universal health care coverage by 2012.

Clinton's proposal would expand the children's health program, which provides health insurance to 6 million children in families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but cannot afford to buy private insurance.

It would aim to give all uninsured children access to coverage by giving states financial incentives to cover children with family incomes of up to four times the poverty level.

Dingell, a longtime supporter of universal health care coverage who leads the House Energy and Commerce Committee, noted that children typically are cheaper to insure than older people.

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Medical center expands women's health services

BY JEANNE KNIAZ
VOICE REPORTER

The New Haven Medical Center on Gratiot was recently awarded a contract to provide the Women Infant Child food and nutrition program to eligible participants in northern Macomb County and those in St. Clair County who wish to take advantage of the convenient location.

Eligible enrollees in the WIC program - low-income pregnant women, new mothers and children up to 5-years-old who are deemed to have nutritional health issues - are provided with coupons for free supplementary foods, nutrition education and counseling, and referrals to such support programs as health care and immunizations.

WIC program services, subsidized by the United States Department of Agriculture through the Michigan Department of Community Health, are offered through area agencies, county health departments and nonprofit organizations.

A depressed economy has created a need for expanded WIC services within the community, and the Macomb County Health Department has been struggling to meet the growing demand.

Circumstances prompted the state to contact the New Haven Medical Center, a non-profit corporation operated by Downriver Community Services in Algonac.

The center meets the criteria of a Federally Qualified Health Center that requires a facility to provide services to areas that are medically underserved in order to receive federal funding.

Michigan residents who qualify under WIC income and health guidelines may receive coupons redeemable at authorized stores for dietary supplements such as milk, infant formula, eggs, cheese, Vitamin C-enriched juices, cereals, peanut butter, dried peas, beans and lentils, tuna fish and carrots.

Information and other resources concerning infant and toddler nutrition, weight gain or loss during pregnancy, iron deficiency concerns, child development and other nutrition topics are also available.

Although in the past the health department provided WIC services via an office within the New Haven Medical Center, program hours were limited to a single day a week.

"Now that we are the provider, WIC services will be available four days a week," said Jason Barber, the center's facility manager and community development and outreach coordinator. "We have provided more space to accommodate our clients, and now there is an independent waiting room."

The center was established 19 years ago in a 7,000 square-foot building in New Haven and last year moved to a 30,000 square-foot facility located at 57737 Gratiot Avenue.

The center's mission is to provide community-based health services for everyone, regardless of race, religion or income; and it accepts most health insurance plans, Medicare and Medicaid.

Uninsured patients may be eligible, pursuant to a sliding fee scale, for medical, behavioral and prescription services at reduced rates depending on a family's size and finances.

In addition to comprehensive medical services, mental health and substance abuse counseling, X-ray and lab services and adolescent health programs, the center offers an expanding array of women's and infant services.

Programs include pre- and postnatal care, gynecological and obstetrical care, family planning, infant health and support programs, new parent support, smoking cessation services and a read, educate and develop youth program.

A bi-lingual staff assists in serving the area's sizeable Hispanic population.

"Our main goal is to provide prenatal care for those who may have a difficult time finding a provider," said Eileen Dudzinski, program manager of women and infant services.

"We are kind of like a little hidden gem here in the community," said Barber.

For further information on WIC services enrollment, call (586) 749-5173. To inquire about other medical center services, call (586) 749-5197.

Click here to return to story:

http://www.voicenews.com/stories/031407/loc_20070314001.shtml

Organization: Michigan Department of Human Services**Date:** 3/15/2007

(powered by NewspaperClips.com)

Red Cross to honor foster care angel

03/15/2007 © Detroit News

ROSEVILLE -- The earliest years of Jeanne Fowler's life read like a horror novel -- torture at the hands of her own mother, watching her brother die and years spent in foster care.

It's the kind of background that might explain, if not excuse, a life of crime or the failure to realize one's potential. Fowler, however, has used it as something else: a springboard.

After years spent as a nurse's aide in California, Fowler has come to Michigan and crafted a second career educating the public about abused children. She regularly speaks with school officials, law enforcement agencies, adoption and foster officials, as well as judges trying to teach them how to identify abuse and how to deal with its victims.

"I have a full schedule," the 60-year-old Roseville resident said with a laugh when asked about her work. "I want people to know what child abuse is really like -- to see it through the eyes of the children."

As a result of her work in the Metro Detroit community, Fowler is the recipient of this year's American Red Cross Neighborhood Friend Award.

In 2000, Fowler created Big Family of Michigan, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children awaiting adoption. Her group provides everything from instruction, to stuffed animals to birthday parties for kids in the foster care system.

Four years ago, Fowler's work caught the eye of officials at Blue Cross and Blue Shield. She won the 2003 Caring for Children Grand Angel Award for her work as a children's advocate.

"What's most impressive about Jeanne is she's a dedicated volunteer who has turned her own tragedy into something good," said Pam William, development consultant/special events for the Red Cross of southeastern Michigan. "She puts forth the effort to let the kids she works with know they are loved -- whether it's with homemade quilts or the animals or the parties.

"What she does is very admirable and very inspiring."

And not everyone can do what she does. To have a true understanding of what children go through when they are taken from their homes, it helps to go through it.

"People forget how much you lose when you're 'saved' or 'rescued,'" Fowler said.

Fowler and several other community leaders will be honored for their work as American Red Cross Heroes March 22 in Troy. Honors go to those who have acted heroically and those whose work symbolizes the humanitarian ideals of the Red Cross.

You can reach Jim Lynch at (586) 468-0520 or jlynch@detnews.com.

Imported: Mar 15 2007 3:07AM Indexed: Mar 15 2007 3:29AM



ourMidland.com
from the Midland Daily News

03/15/2007

Colonial Villa has less than 30 days to apply for license

By [Angela E. Lackey](#)

Colonial Villa has less than a month to apply for an adult foster care license, or close its doors.

The Midland assisted living facility has been under investigation by the Department of Human Services since Feb. 20 for operating without a license. DHS also was investigating a possible flu outbreak. Fifty-three senior citizens between the ages of 58 to 98 live in the facility's private apartments.

The investigation report is dated March 8, and Colonial Villa has 30 days from that date to apply for the license.

DHS officials conducted an unannounced, onsite investigation on Feb. 23. They found the building and its interior clean and well-maintained. They interviewed three officials, four staff members and five residents. They also reviewed four resident records.

Staff said the facility offers different levels of care; for example, Level III services include full assistance with toileting, bathing and daily grooming. According to the inspection report, Administrator Danelle Tighe would neither confirm nor deny there were residents receiving that level of care.

While there, DHS officials saw at least one resident being given medication by staff. Staff told DHS officials they also feed at least two residents, and help another resident with toileting, showering and dressing.

It was these activities and others that led DHS to deem that the facility is required to be licensed. Colonial Villa and its parent company, Tendercare Inc., will work with the state to get the necessary licensing. Neither the facility nor Tendercare officials have commented on the investigation.

Mike Krecek, the Midland County Department of Public Health director/health officer, has been forwarded a copy of the report, although the department most likely will play no direct role in the state licensing issue.

But he is concerned, and in particular, wants to follow up on the state's food service inspection in light of recent gastrointestinal illness that could have been a norovirus.

"That could be a concern," he said. "It's something we want to look into further."

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Bay City Times Letters

March 15, 2007

Nathaniel Abraham

Voice: Barbara A. Mitchell, Bay City

So Mr. Bush (People's Forum, Feb. 26) liked Mr. Trischler's letter (Feb. 15) regarding Nathaniel Abraham. I, too, was upset with both The Times' and Detroit Free Press' constant in-depth coverage, but for an entirely different reason.

Yes, this young man made a horrible mistake at the age of 11 and has spent his crucial teen years institutionalized. But now he has an opportunity to turn his life around and to start over with a clean slate. I pray that the two men whose letters were printed represent only a tiny, bigoted minority in this area.

And I wish young Mr. Abraham the best of luck as he starts his new life in this community.



Ohio boy, 13, faces 128 felony charges

March 15, 2007

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NELSONVILLE, Ohio — A 13-year-old boy is charged in juvenile court with 128 felonies in what police call a small-town crime spree.

The boy, in juvenile detention pending a pretrial hearing later this month, faces delinquency counts of burglary, theft, vandalism and witness intimidation.

“In my 30 years of doing this, I’ve never had a juvenile that young with so many charges,” Athens County Prosecutor C. David Warren said Tuesday.

Police accuse the boy of breaking into homes and businesses in Nelsonville, a small, rural town 55 miles southeast of Columbus, and of stealing checks from elderly residents, Warren said.

He also is accused of beating one of the witnesses who turned him in, Warren said.

At least three other youths, one of them 10 years old, also have been charged, Warren said.

The boy could be freed at 21 even if he is convicted of all 128 counts, prosecutors said.

“We either get him rehabilitated now in the juvenile system or we will be dealing with him for the rest of his life,” Warren said.

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States Putting More Focus On Pre-K

Children Typically Enter School Around Age 5

POSTED: 9:48 am EDT March 14, 2007

ARLINGTON, Va. – (AP) Yasmine Carrizo has trouble pinpointing exactly what she likes best about pre-kindergarten at Carlin Springs Elementary.

"I like the toys, and playing house, and book time, and sleep-over (nap) time," the wide-eyed 4-year-old says one morning as she colors with markers at a table just her size.

Barely taking a breath, Yasmine starts to list additional favorites when she gets a cue from her teacher.

"Gotta go," she tells a visitor, dashing off with pigtails bobbing to join her friends at the classroom door. "It's library time!"

It's not hard to find such enthusiasm at the cheerful school, one of several hundred in Virginia that offer state-funded preschool to low-income 4-year-olds.

Nationwide, children typically enter school around age 5, when they're ready for kindergarten.

But research highlighting the importance of early learning is prompting more and more states to add pre-kindergarten programs.

Arkansas' pre-K programs were fifth-best nationally in providing access for 3-year-olds and ranked 15th for access among 4-year-olds.

By spending \$4,836 per student, Arkansas ranked ninth in pre-K spending, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research.

"Virtually every state has a very strong movement toward doing a better job with pre-k," said Arthur Rolnick, a senior vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis and part of a group of business leaders calling for giving low-income kids earlier access to public school.

A report released Wednesday finds states spent at least \$3.3 billion last year on pre-kindergarten. That doesn't include money from federal and local governments, which contribute to the state programs.

The state funding is up from \$2.8 billion in 2005, according to the institute, based at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

In all, nearly 1 million children, or 20 percent of the country's 4-year-olds, were in state pre-kindergarten last year -- up from 17 percent the previous year, the report found.

About two-thirds of 4-year-olds are in private preschool or child-care programs or at home, the study said.

About one in 10 is in Head Start, the federal pre-kindergarten program for poor children, the report said. The \$6.8 billion Head Start program covers only about half of all eligible children. About 7 percent of the nation's 3-year-olds also participate in Head Start.

As in Virginia, most state-funded programs are aimed at poor children. However, Florida, Georgia and Oklahoma offer pre-k to all 4-year-olds. Other states are considering going that route.

Illinois Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich won approval to extend preschool to all 3- and 4-year-olds by 2011 and is pushing for the money to do it.

The federal No Child Left Behind education law probably has something to do with the trend, says Steven Barnett, who wrote the report on state pre-k spending.

One of that law's goals is to eliminate achievement gaps between low-income and wealthier students, but studies show the gap begins before children enter school.

"Schools are quite aware if we start off behind ... we will have a very difficult time making this up by the time we're responsible for the test scores," Barnett said.

Rolnick and Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman of the University of Chicago have been speaking out on the fiscal benefits of paying for pre-k. They say getting kids off to a solid start is much cheaper than giving them remedial education later.

Pre-k advocates point to research including:

- An ongoing study dating to the 1960s in Ypsilanti, Mich., in which some children were randomly assigned to attend a high-quality preschool and some were not. Those who went were more likely to graduate from high school, had higher earnings and were less likely to be arrested.

- A study of children who were randomly selected for an early learning program in North Carolina that began in the 1970s, which found participants did better in reading and math and were less likely to be left back later.

- A 2003 Georgetown University examination of the Oklahoma preschool program, which found children in pre-k had improved cognitive and language skills.

The research generally shows low-income students get more out of pre-k than higher-income children.

"To me, the most compelling rationale for it is the inequity data," said Sharon Lynn Kagan, associate dean for policy at Columbia University's Teachers College. "My hope would be that everybody would have it. Short of that, I think you need to think carefully about where you invest and that indeed is what most states have done."

But those pushing for a broader approach want pre-k to become part of the structure of the U.S. school system, as it is in other industrialized countries such as France and Italy. That would mean offering it to everyone, regardless of income.

"This is a part of school reform," said Libby Doggett, executive director of Washington-based Pre-K Now, which advocates for broad access to pre-k. "If you're not going to means-test first grade, then don't means-test this."

Those pushing for pre-k for all think they will have a better chance of getting political support for a program offered to everyone.

The fight for public pre-k is an echo of one that generally started in the 1970s over access to full-day kindergarten. Back then, about 20 percent of kindergartners were in a full-day program, compared with roughly 65 percent today, according to Barnett.

The pre-k programs are a mix of part- and full-day programs. Those without full-day coverage or extended care sometimes have trouble meeting the needs of working families.

The Virginia Preschool Initiative requires teachers to work closely with parents, and the Carlin Springs teachers even visit students' homes.

For Christopher Lyon, a pre-k teacher at the northern Virginia school, such visits provide greater insight into his students' lives.

"One home visit I went on, there were six people living in a one-bedroom apartment with one plastic PVC white chair and a twin bed in the living room and a milk crate full of kind of leftover toys," Lyon said.

During a separate conversation with a student's father, Lyon realized the man couldn't write his own name.

It's unlikely Lyon's students will find themselves in that position. They are working on early reading and writing skills in their sunny classroom full of books and colorful labels that practically shout out the names of toys and art supplies that fill the room.

Lyon says he feels confident pre-kindergarten is helping his students, saying, "There is tremendous progress from everyone."

And parents who participate in the state programs express delight with them.

Barbara Brockhaus' two children attended pre-kindergarten at Wilson Elementary School in Oklahoma City, and she said the class prepared them for kindergarten, something educators say is necessary given the increasingly challenging curricula in early grades.

She also said the program is fun, which is important since pre-kindergartners are forming opinions about school.

"When your kids wake up and they find out it's Saturday and they're upset -- then I think there is something really good going on at that school," she said.

Michigan Report

March 14, 2007

HOUSE PANEL APPROVES CHECK-OFF FOR HEATING ASSISTANCE

Michigan income taxpayers would have the opportunity to donate some of their refund to a home heating assistance fund under legislation reported Wednesday from the House Energy and Technology Committee.

The bills ([HB 4064](#) and [HB 4280](#)) create a new fund for heating assistance and a check-off on state income tax forms to donate money to that fund. The \$5 donations could generate as much as \$1.5 million annually, according to analyses.

The bills were amended to accommodate changes the Department of Treasury has proposed to the income tax forms regarding the various check-offs.

The committee also gave its nod to [HB 4219](#), creating a tax credit for biomass furnaces. But it then referred the bill to the House Agriculture Committee for further discussions.

Senate sends Granholm supplemental spending bill

LANSING (AP) — The state Senate on Tuesday sent Gov. Jennifer Granholm a bill allocating about \$240 million in supplemental spending, including \$49 million to cover overspending by three state departments last year.

The move will let state government close the books on the 2005-06 budget year in the black.

About \$180 million of the funding is for the current budget year that began Oct. 1, much of it federal money for airport safety.

After unanimously approving the bill, senators began debating.

Republicans again said the Democratic governor's administration should have alerted them of the overspending earlier and suggested it was suppressed until after the Nov. 7 election, when Granholm won re-election. Democrats responded that Republicans have shown no leadership in replacing the state's expiring Single Business Tax, putting at risk Michigan's credit rating.

In a report on the overspending, the nonpartisan Senate Fiscal Agency said the state has done a good job monitoring spending levels in recent years. But the agency noted that last year's spending was the biggest overrun since the 1991-92 fiscal year.

State officials have blamed the overruns on increased prisoner health care costs, overtime pay, higher welfare caseloads, higher fuel costs and less revenue from fees than expected.

Section: Michigan Date Posted: 3/14/2007